XX

The Mundurucu language

• 192

We shall now list some phrases and words from the Mundurucu language.

[English]	Tupi	Mundurucu
Good afternoon	ianẽ caruca	oui caxitengue
good morning	ianẽ eoema	cabiã
so long [até a volta]	acuri cha iuera ramé	repite bimé
goodnight	ianẽ pitũna	iaicate
how are you?	catu meri serã?	chi pateene?
I am well	catu teẽn	une chipate

[English]	Mundurucu
sun	coxi
moon	caxiate
man	anhocate
woman	aiatiate
day	cabiã
night	ximãn
star	tacẽpetã
rain	mambaũte
thunder	beru-xixi
sky or heavenly regions	cabi
cloud	cabi crereate
water	iribi
boy	berechata
Let us eat	nhachecon
wart	querẽra
nose	ueramboque
tooth	ueirei
eye	uetã
tongue	ueicu

[English]	Mundurucu
192 mouth	ueibi-xéc [?]
face	ueirupá
head	uiaã
ear	oenhemb̃oe
leg	uiraũ
foot	uiei
arm	uibá
nail [finger or toe]	uẽinrãn
[127]	
beard	uibirape
hair	uiarape
hand	uebaraná
finger	ueibẽ
eyebrows	ueitá embite
toe	uiei
breast [chest]	ueicameta
abdomen	uẽiecca
navel	uẽrampeá
throat	uecumbirá
neck	uanhembé
mole [spot]	ueixiquetique
arm-pit	ueinhembi
nostril	uiabingta
hammock	caran
I	une
you	ene
he	inhedhe
they [masc.]	inhedheanhe
friend	ubeixi
older brother	uamu
younger brother	ocouto
sister	uẽixite

192
193

[English]	Mundurucu
to give--unheme	
I give	une unheme
you give	ene unheme
he gives	inhedhe-ate unheme
they [masc.] give	inhedianhe unheme
to be a man--anhocate dhẽ	
I am a man	une dhẽ anhocate
you are a man	ene dlhẽ [sic] anhocate
he is a man	inhe dhẽ anhocate
they are men	inhedianhe anhocate
to eat--uchecune	
I eat	une uchecune
you eat	ene edhuũ
he eats	inhedhẽẽ udhuũ
they [masc.] eat	inhedianhe udhuũ

[128]

[English]	Mundurucu
I'm coming [eu já vou]	udhebeque
regards to yourself [?] [lembranças para ti mesmo]	ecatu dhe euẽ bẽ
all Mundurucu are kinsmen	Mundurucus [sic] nheẽn dhiu anhum umain
my soul goes to heaven	ubiumbẽ cabi cahi dhe
I miss my mother	nheben nexi cahi
I miss my son	nheben opute cahi
I am your friend	une ubei xixi
I shall not see you again	nhan sẽn ehuame dhei une

197
171 The following table will facilitate comparison of the Mundurucu dialect with the three principal American languages.

[129]

/5 cont./

*241
•192

7. Let us explain further the Indian's notion or idea of the concept "garden" (ko). To him, "garden" is, basically, a garden of bitter manioc, or in a broader sense, tubercles such as sweet manioc, yams, sweet potatoes, caladium, etc. This narrow concept probably arose in the time when tubercles, especially bitter manioc, were the only cultivated plants. Nowadays, of course, the Mundurukú have at their disposal a much greater variety of cultivable plants which they grow in their bitter-manioc gardens. Speaking of these products, they usually amplify on the "garden" concept with terms which, to our minds, would seem unnecessary, such as: "the pumpkins which I grow in my bitter-manioc garden," etc. If they have prepared gardens of products which are not tubercles, such as for example maize alone, they will clarify the matter beforehand by speaking of a "maize garden," etc. But "garden" means, to them, a bitter-manioc garden. As for the dual term for garden used by men and women, we shall speak of this when we come to social factors.

*241 [183] The entire process of native agricultural work, especially the application and execution of what we could call "garden methods," is based on fixed, traditional norms, which in turn are determined by the conditions imposed by nature as to climate, seasons, terrain, etc., and also by the logical sequence of agricultural tasks,

/14 cont./

*241 •192 262

a) Plants cultivated in the gardens:
bitter manioc—masok, six varieties
manicuera—maso, manikue, two varieties
sweet manioc—makachi, two varieties
yams—awai, 11 varieties
sweet potato—wechick, four varieties
caladium—various names (poririt, kurudyudyut), two varieties
pumpkin—yurumu, yurumu a, various kinds
watermelon—borāchia, borāsia, three varieties
sugar cane—kanya
pineapple—ipara, five varieties
maize—mora, two varieties
rice—arúida
beans—feijáu, wetoi, three varieties
peanut—wenambone
tobacco—he, e
curauá pineapple—ipara he

Also:
pepper—achi, achi a, four varieties
banana—aku, 11 varieties
cotton—buru, two varieties
urucú—tyuku, tyoku a
papaya—asāu a, two varieties

b) Plants cultivated outside the gardens:
gourd—ua e, wa e
jamarú gourd—uai a, wai a

/15/ arrowhead—opipa
coffee—kape, kape ip, various types
cacao—wadye, three varieties
genipa—warem ap, warem ap a
inga—chiriri
lemon—brimão, brimáu
orange—yarai, yarai ip
mango—māga, māka, various types
cashew—murese, muroso, three varieties

/15 cont./

*241 Also:

●192 pepper—achi, achi a, four varieties
262 banana—aku, 11 varieties
cotton—buru, two varieties
urucú—tyuku, tyuku a
papaya—asïu a, two varieties

*241 There is, therefore, a small group of plants which are found in the gardens as well as out: pepper, bananas, cotton, urucú, and papayas.

[249] For certain plant species, such as for example tobacco and the curauá pineapple, a plot of ground is often set aside, or a small garden is prepared separately.

249 Aside from these plants, which are useful to subsistence, the Mundurukú also have a certain number of vegetables which backwoodsmen call "smell" and which they use when they are bathing, to give their body, and especially their hair, a more pleasant odor.

[302] [157] [189] A few herbs are also cultivated for medicinal purposes. Others yet are used in the practice of certain superstitions and charms. Although I am aware that these subjects are not directly related to agriculture, I mention them in passing since "cultivated plants" are involved.

*241 From this list, it becomes clear that the Mundurukú must have had considerable contact with civilization and with other tribes to have acquired such a number of useful plants. As for the ancient stock of plants cultivated by the Indians in the Amazon forest, tubercles must be mentioned first and foremost. Moreover, /16/ it seems that the use of some of these typically native plants, such as for example curauá pineapple or sweet manioc, is not very old, for a series of tribes possessing a type of agriculture quite similar to that of the Mundurukú are not yet familiar with the cultivation of sweet manioc or curauá pineapple. (9)

[171] 9. Thus, for instance, the majority of the Carib tribes of the Brazilian Guianas are unfamiliar with the cultivation

/20 cont./

of the man	of the woman
7. Burning the remaining brush	- -
8. Planting: opening the pit	Planting: burying the manioc shoots
9. - -	Weeding the garden
10. - -	Doing the second weeding of the garden
11. - -	Harvesting: pulling up the manioc roots, tearing up the plot.

This basic outline applies to normal cases. If there is pressing need or urgency, the man may help, at times, in weeding, cleaning, and even harvesting tasks. But in themselves, these are tasks peculiar to the woman, and they devolve by right to the woman in accordance with the working cycle.

This division of labor presents yet another facet. It does not exist merely as regards the preparation and usage of the garden, but also as regards the very species of cultivated plants. There, too, there is a certain exclusivity, to wit: the man alone plants and cultivates watermelon, pumpkins, peanuts, papaya, and beans.

In the case of most cultivated plants or seeds, however, there is a joint task involved in the manner already mentioned: the /21/ man opens up the pit and the woman puts in the shoots or seeds of bitter manioc, yam, sugar cane, maize, rice, pineapple, banana tree, etc., etc.

The terminology applying to the concept "garden" is also dependent upon this division of labor into two cycles according to sex. There are two words for "garden": the man says kat, the woman ko. These two terms are not, properly speaking, a dual designation of the garden, but they refer to the garden while it is under the care of one of the sexes. These are relative terms. Thus, kat, the term used by the men, covers the preparation of the plot until planting time—the clearing job performed by the men. Ko, the women's word for "garden," covers the woman's labors in the plot from the

/21 cont./

241 time of planting onward. In terms of their basic meaning, these
192 two words could be translated as follows: kat as "clearing" and ko
462 as "planting." It thus becomes clearer why the woman would never say, for instance, that she is going to the kat, to the clearing, because it is not she who does this, but /would say/ that she is going to the ko, the planting, because it is she, in fact, who does the planting. The opposite applies to the man. If, however, there is need for the use of a general, impersonal term, the man will also use the word ko, but with the respective modifier of its being "hers" or "the woman's," so that no misunderstanding may arise.

2. Garden and family: agricultural property and mutual assistance

241 It is plain that this complex of agricultural matters is reflected
621 in the family life of the Indians, not only for the Mundurukú who still live communally in the old village system, but also for those [178] who have broken away from this way of life and set up a separate [591] nucleus with their family, living an isolated life with their own house and garden. Indeed, nowadays, it is necessary to make a distinction:

[162] 1. Between the Mundurukú Indians of the interior, numbering 250, a minority of approximately one-fifth of the total of 1,200, who still live according to the traditional system of tribal communities or villages;

[177] 2. Between the Mundurukú who are already more or less acculturated /and live/ on the Tapajós, Cururú, Tropas, etc. rivers.

/22/ Within the first group, in the interior, we find more or
241 less the primitive or traditional form of the Mundurukú agricultural
476 system: a system of collective labor based on mutual assistance.
621 Murphy indicates the present conditions in the villages of the interior when he says: "Every adult /Mundurukú/ of the plains of the male sex has his own plot which is cleared by the collective effort of all the men in the village and which is planted with manioc roots with the cooperation of the entire village." (11) This cooperative labor

11. Murphy, 1954: 28.

*241 /30 cont./
104

w — as in English.
ü — as in German, but shorter.
ö — as the German umlauted "o," but shorter.
r — always dental.
s — always strong.
z — always weak.
Final consonants (as: k - p - t)
are not plosive.
The tonic accent, unless otherwise
noted, is always on the last syllable.

*241
●192
[412]

a) Tools:

spade	pururе
iron digging tool	chit
digging stick	ip mararairarab ip

b) Garden and garden tasks:

garden (while under the man's care); he says:	kat
garden (while under the woman's care); she says:	ko
to clear the undergrowth	tyup tatabm
to fell (the trees)	yup chign; yup chichign
to burn	imapign
brush	taipa
to pile up the brush	taipa chign; taipa chichign
to burn the brush	taipa mapign
to plant (bitter manioc)	(masok) taizabm; (masok) ip maum
to weed, first cleaning	tip ogn
to weed, second cleaning	karit ogn
to pull up the manioc roots	masok ta ogn
to replant	warabm ypu maum; yab; kuon

/31/

*241
•192
[248]

2) Referring to cultivated plants.

cotton (Gossypium)	buru
• large variety /long staple?/	buru chichi
• small variety /short staple?/	buru anan
pincapple (Ananas sativus)	ipara
• large, sour variety	ipara chichi
• field variety	ipara dyõ dyõ
• thornless, sweet variety	ipara biraprap
• small variety	ipara anan
• small, yellow variety	ipara rem
rice (Oryza)	arúira
banana (Musa sapientum)	aku
• São Tomé variety	aku rabõ chichi; (aku robõ)
• caiena or caiana variety	aku ãnya
• inajá variety	aku an an pa
• purple variety	aku pakpak
• white variety	aku ririt
banana white variety	aku roror; aku rign rign
• "water" or chorona variety	aku ipapan; aku chik pa
• (Musa paradisiaca): pacova variety	aku chichi
• large pacova variety	aku ok pirur chichi
• • • •	aku ok pirur an
• • • •	aku hi ba beredn pa
sweet potato (Ipomoea batatas)	wechik
potato yellow variety	wechik pakpak
sweet potato purplish variety	wechik tuituí
• • white •	wechik ririt
• • (spotted inside)	wechik pirĩ parurak
cacao (Theobroma cacao)	wadye
• domesticated, planted	wadye
• wild (sometimes planted)	wadye buruburu—pa
/32/ • • •	wadye akarap pa
coffee (Coffea)	kape (ip)

*241
192

/32 cont./

cashew	(Anacardium sp.)	murese; muroso
"	white variety	murese ririt ta
"	red "	murese pakpak hat ta
"	field "	murese krau
sugar cane	(Saccharum officinarum)	kanya
yam	(Dioscorea)	awai; puira
"	half-purple, half-white-inside variety	awai kurep (ta)
"	darkish variety	awai pugnpugn (ta)
"	" "	awai ruirui
"	black, small variety (/eaten/ mixed with manicuera)	awai tutu
"	("looks like a human hand") variety	awai panaryat
"	"large ball" variety	awai puira chik a a
"	long, slender, white variety	awai puira brechidn (puira beredn; puira ririt)
"	red-inner-coat variety	awai puira ara be pak
"	large variety, cará-assu	awai puira
"	red variety	awai puira pakpak
"	round, red-and-white variety	awai-ra
gourd	(Crescentia)	ua e; wa e
curauá pineapple	(Bromeliaceae)	ipara he
bean	(Phaseolus sp.):	
	large	feijáu; wetoi
	small	wetoi anan
	common (small with elongated bean)	hadyorõ
genipa	(Genipa americana)	warem ap (a)
pumpkin	(Cucurbita)	yurumu (a)
inga	(Inga)	chiriri
jamarú gourd	(Cucurbita; Lagenaria /33/ vulgaris)	uai a; wai a
orange	(Citrus)	yarai ip
lemon	(Citrus)	brimão, brimáu, brimáu /hic/

/33 cont./

sweet manioc (Manihot sp.—palmata?)	makachi
• • white variety	makachi taritat
• • yellow variety	makachi potpot
papaya (Carica papaya)	asãu a
• purple	asãu rom rom (asãu rem rem)
mango (Mangifera indica)	mĩga, mĩka
manicuera (Manihot sp.?)	maso; manihue
• purple-leaf variety	maso
• white-leaf •	maso yubritat
bitter manioc (Manihot utilissima)	masok
• yellow variety	masok pekpek
• purplish-leaf variety	masok tchukumai
• large-leaf variety	masok yairupnyen
• purple-leaf variety (paraíso)	masok paraisu
• white variety	masok tatya ĩm ĩm at
• small-leaf variety	masok anan
watermelon (Citrullus vulgaris), red flesh	barẽchi, burĩti-a
• white-flesh variety	barẽchi a biu chep nyen a a
• small variety	barẽchi an an a
• purple-flesh variety	barẽchi rem rem a
maize (Zea mays)	mura, mora
• hard grain	mora tyatya (ta)
/34/ soft grain	mora tya am am (ta); mora hat
peanut (Arachis hypogaea)	wenambone
pepper (Capsicum)	achi (a)
• green pepper variety	achi chichi (a)
• odoriferous variety	achirew
• red-pepper variety	chi kaf (a)
• round variety	achi kurẽtanyen (a)
[276] tobacco (Nicotiana tabacum)	he; e
caladium (Aracea sp.), bush variety, planted	poririt
• dragonaroid variety	kurudyudyut
timbo vine (Paullinia? Serjania?)	sĩ ok, sĩ ok papa
urucú (Bixa orellana)	tyuku (a)